

SCHOOL POLICY GUIDELINES FOR REPLACING AND DENYING MEALS

LOST/STOLEN/MISUSED TICKETS (1,2):

USDA's National School Lunch Program (NSLP) encourages schools to develop a policy to handle the situation when a student has a lost, stolen, or misused meal ticket. The term "ticket" is generic for any medium of exchange, including debit card systems, used to obtain a meal. When a student is without a ticket, the school may establish its own ticket replacement procedure. If the policy limits the number of tickets reissued, it must conform to the following standards:

1. The school policy must be in writing and issued as a letter to the home or as part of the student handbook.
2. A minimum of three (3) ticket replacements must be allowed for each student per year.
3. The school must keep a list of students who report lost/stolen/misused tickets.
4. The list should be consulted each time a student reports lost/stolen/misused tickets.
5. A written warning must be given at least once before the ticket replacement is denied.
 - a. It must include an explanation that the student has requested a ticket replacement due to lost/stolen/misused ticket.
 - b. It must include the number of ticket replacements issued to the student to date.
 - c. A written warning must state that the next time the student does not have a ticket he/she will either be denied a meal or will be served an alternate meal.
6. The policy must apply equally too free, reduced and full paid students.
7. Schools must always provide meals to students in grades K-2 or to students with disabilities that may make them unable to take full responsibility for their ticket.

ALTERNATE MEALS (3):

1. Schools may offer alternate meals to students who have used their three ticket replacements. There are two (2) approaches to offering alternate meals:
 - a. Schools may offer an alternate meal that is not eligible for reimbursement, for example, a cheese sandwich and milk.

- b. Schools may offer an alternate meal that is eligible for reimbursement, where the meal meets the meal pattern requirements, for example, a cheese sandwich, apple, carrot sticks, and milk.
2. The school policy can limit the number of alternate meals a student receives.

CHARGING MEALS (3,4):

1. NSLP does not regulate meals that students charge at school.
2. If a student has a charge balance, the school must provide a meal when the student is using money to pay for the current day's meal or future meals.
3. It is permissible for schools to serve only one (1) particular set of food items to children whose parents owe the school money, as long as the food items comprise a reimbursable meal.
4. If a student repeatedly comes to school with no lunch and no money, report this to the building administrator. It could be a sign of abuse or neglect.

DENYING MEALS (3,5):

1. NSLP Regulations prohibit schools from denying meals as a form of disciplinary action against free, reduced or paid students.
2. Schools may deny a meal to a student who pays reduced or full price and who does not provide the required payment for that meal.
3. If a student is in a discipline/detention situation during the lunch period, schools may serve meals that are different from the one being served in the lunchroom and in a different location as long as the meal pattern is followed and a reimbursable meal is offered.

REFERENCES

1. MDE Administrative Policy Memo #3, SY 1988-89
2. USDA FNS Instruction 765-7, Rev. 1
3. USDA MWRO FY 97 Policy Memo #5
4. USDA MWRO SMP Call Minutes 6/25/01
5. USDA FNS Instruction 791-1

Any additional questions, please call the Michigan Department of Education, Grants Coordination and School Support, School Nutrition Training and Programs Unit, 517-373-3347 OR 517-373-2077.